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# MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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A summary of significant events of  
interest to USDA management

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REVISED PERFORMANCE RATING FORM.....The Civil Service Commission has approved the Department's revised performance rating form. This revision changes the rating scale from nine to five points and introduces the requirement that the employees major activities be identified on the rating form. This form will be introduced as part of the Department's Merit Promotion Plan and will be in Department-wide use by the end of FY 77. (Contact: Bill Parent, OP, ext. 78721)

EMPLOYMENT CEILING.....FY 77 and FY 78 end-of-year employment ceilings have been received from OMB and are being reviewed relative to budget allowances. Agency ceilings will be distributed within a few days. (Contact: Bob Sherman, OMF, ext. 76176)

PRESIDENTIAL BUDGET ALLOWANCES.....FY 78 Presidential budget allowances have been received from OMB and have been issued to agencies. Revised budget schedules which are included in the President's budget and the budget appendix are being revised to reflect the President's allowance decisions.

The Department has a very tight turnaround time for this data. The submission date for galley is December 8; for dummy page, December 20; and true page, December 30.

These deadlines are critical for January 17 submission to Congress. Complete cooperation from agency and staff office budget personnel is necessary. (Contact: Bob Sherman, OMF, ext. 76176)

IMPLEMENTATION OF OMB CIRCULAR NO. A-110.....Departmental Regulations to implement Circular No. A-110 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations) are being developed. Draft regulations should be distributed to agencies for comment by December 1. (Contact: Don Manns, OO, ext. 77527)

GSA ADVISORY GROUP.....The Public Buildings Service Region 2, New York, has established a building service advisory group to provide a necessary link in the chain of communication between the region and agencies serviced. The Director of Office of Operations and a selected number of senior executives representing their departments have been invited to serve as members, along with the Regional Commissioner, GSA Public Buildings Service, New York. The first meeting will be held in New York on December 8. (Contact: Ed Alvarez, OO, ext. 73937)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CIVIL RIGHTS.....The final meeting of the Committee, prior to appointment of new members, was held on November 16 and 17. The Committee drew up 12 recommendations designed to improve the Department's civil rights posture for presentation to the Secretary. The Assistant Secretary for Administration addressed the Committee on the specific civil rights actions the Department is currently undertaking. (Contact: J. Fred King, OEO, ext. 77117)

MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE.....The Agricultural Marketing Service has awarded its first 8(a) contract for commodities. The contract totaling \$25,560 was made to the H&H Meat Products, Inc., a Hispanic firm located in Texas. This is the beginning of a pilot project worked out by AMS, with the help of OEO, and the Small Business Administration to support minority meat producing firms. OEO will continue to serve in an advisory capacity and lend its support to the project. (Contact: J. Fred King, OEO, ext. 77117)

EMSC WOMEN'S PROGRAM.....EMSC has done an outstanding job over a number of years with regard to the employment of women. This record is the result of a positive effort to advance women from clerical and technical positions to specialist positions, as well as to recruit qualified women at the entry level.

EMSC has taken advantage of the Department's upward mobility programs to allow eligible employees to obtain high school equivalency diplomas, to send women to college during working hours, and to establish formal bridge positions for lower grade employees.

EMSC's results are impressive:

	USDA June 76	EMSC Nov. 76
% of women in all GS grades	24.7	46.8
% of women in grades 7-12	11.0	50.9
% of women in grades 13 and above	3.4	12.5
Average grade of women employees	5.8	7.0

This progress is an example of what can be accomplished through the development of a positive approach to reaching new goals. (Contact: Joan Golden, EMSC, ext. 72244)

EXECUTIVE PAY.....The quadrennial Commission on Executive, Legislative and Judicial salaries is expected to recommend to the President, by the end of this month, substantial pay increases for high level officials.

The President will study the proposals and send his recommendations to the Congress in January as part of his budget message. The proposals would become law within 30 days after that unless vetoed by the House or Senate.

The President's Advisory Committee on Federal Pay has recommended increases up to \$19,800. CSC Chairman Hampton recommended a "sizeable" pay increase but recognized that achieving true pay comparability is a longer range goal. Chairman Hampton testified at the Commission's hearings on executive salaries that comparability for a GS-18 would be "more than \$80,000" while actual pay is \$39,600. (Contact: Verna Deane Brown, OP, ext. 73641)

OMB CIRCULAR NO. A-113.....This Circular entitled the "Preparation and Submission of Management Plans, General Information and Policies, General Requirements" reaffirms the President's commitment to achieve major management objectives. A-113 provides detailed guidance and specific actions to be taken by heads of executive departments and agencies and is effective immediately. Copies of the Circular will be distributed at the Management Council Conference.

Management plans for FY 77 will be submitted to OMB no later than December 15, 1976. In subsequent years, submission will be at the time provided for submission of the Department's budget as provided by A-11.

Reporting of progress and problems in achieving management plans will be on a quarterly basis and monthly Presidential Management Initiative reports are to be discontinued. (Contact: Jerome A. Miles, OMF, ext. 73323)

DISPOSITION OF OFFICIAL RECORDS.....The National Archives and Records Service has issued GSA Bulletin FPMR B-65. This Bulletin appeared in the Federal Register on November 19 and provided guidelines for distinguishing between personal papers and official records. It also cites the law prohibiting removal or destruction of government records.

OMF issued a transmittal (Notice OMF-M-6) to heads of agencies, with a copy of this article, on November 23. (Contact: Peter Doyle, OMF, ext. 75725)

OMB ADP ALLOWANCES.....The Department has received the following ADP allowances from OMB: FY 77, \$81.4 million; FY 78, \$89.2 million; and FY 79, \$97.4 million. These allowances are less than what the Department had requested. ADS will provide further information shortly concerning the allocation of these allowances within USDA. (Contact: R. Head, ADS, ext. 77543)

THIRD USDA ADP MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE.....USDA will conduct its Third ADP Management Conference at the Dulles Marriott Hotel on December 2 and 3. The theme of the conference is "Economic Analysis from the ADP Manager's Perspective." The Assistant Secretary for Administration will deliver the keynote address. The majority of the 1 1/2 day session will be devoted to a workshop on economic analysis using examples of work performed within the Department. Walter Haase, OMB, will discuss trends in ADP expenditures within the Federal Government; Howard Frank, President of Network Analysis Corporation, will discuss the economics of distributive processing; and Frank Silbey, Assistant to Congressman John Moss of California, will discuss the Privacy Act as it pertains to the Federal ADP environment. (Contact: R. Long, ADS, ext. 74789)

APPLICATION REVIEW BOARD.....ADS sent a letter to selected Management Council members on October 29, requesting a copy of procedures concerning the operation of agency application review boards that were to be established by October 15. Agencies who have not yet responded are requested to provide the information as soon as possible. (Contact: R. Head, ADS, ext. 77543)

NATIONAL FINANCE CENTER NEWS.....

...Inquiry Unit - At a recent Management Council Meeting, some agencies indicated that their personnel were experiencing problems in getting through to the Inquiry Unit. The telephone company has agreed to place a "Busy" monitor on the inquiry system for a two-week period in early December. The NFC will take appropriate action based on the survey findings.

...Meetings - The meeting with personnel officers will be held the week of January 10 and the fiscal officers meeting is scheduled for the week of February 7. More information will be available later on these meetings.

...NFC Visitors - Recent visitors to the NFC included a staff member of the House District Committee representing the Congressional Commission reviewing the financial system in the District of Columbia. This Commission would like to have the NFC make a presentation to that group. No date has yet been scheduled. Other visitors included officials from the State of Idaho interested in the total NFC system concept.

...Central Accounting System (CAS) - Substantial progress is being made in resolving all CAS problems. Recent accomplishments include:

- The first SF-225, Statement of Transactions, was produced in October for Treasury.
- The budget/cost subsystem has been updated through the end of the first 28 day accounting period.
- Most of 169 new or modified programs in the system are fully debugged.

Agencies covered by the CAS are EMSC, ERS, SRS, P&SA, RDS, NAL, FCS, CSRS.

...AD-838 System - This system is now processing transactions for disbursements, however, some difficulties have been encountered in the general ledger system. At least 98% of all transactions are being accounted for properly.

...Increased Volumes of Transactions - Over 500,000 travel vouchers will be processed in FY 76 compared with 420,000 in FY 75. In pay period 21, the NFC paid 124,314 people. This compares with 118,965 for the same period in 1975 and 114,972 in 1974.

EEO PRESENTATION.....On November 17, the Assistant Secretary for Administration, USDA Spanish Speaking Program Coordinator, George Del Valle, and FNS Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator, Estelle Gross, attended a presentation on "The History and Culture of Minorities." The presentation was given by Mr. Carlton A. Funn, a former Fairfax County teacher who has spent 20 years compiling an exhibit on minorities and women. Mr. Funn offers to provide exhibits, materials, films, etc., to interested groups for \$500 per day. This material has been presented to Federal agencies, community groups, and schools and has received widespread publicity for its thoroughness. (Contact: Gloria Torres, OP, ext. 72973)

EXPANDED USE OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM.....In a letter of November 17 to Assistant Secretaries, the Assistant Secretary for Administration once again urged expanded use of the Cooperative Education Program as a means of attracting minorities and women to the Department of Agriculture. This program provides for periods of study-related employment for students pursuing a baccalaureate curriculum. Upon completion of all requirements for a degree, students can be converted non-competitively to a career-conditional appointment. Agencies should review their use of the program and develop plans for its increased use in FY 77. The Office of Personnel will provide agencies with technical assistance in identifying positions, listings of schools with Cooperative Education Programs, and establishing agreements upon request. (Contact: Patricia Killen, OP, ext. 72435)